



(Photo by Spc. L.B. Edgar 7th MPAD)

## Selfless service

Col. Mike Shields, commander, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, and Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Ulibarri, 172nd BCT senior noncommissioned officer, from Thornton, Colo., case their unit's colors during a ceremony Nov. 24 outside the Division Morale Welfare and Recreation complex on Camp Liberty. The Arctic Wolves served 16 consecutive months in Iraq and are officially head back to Alaska.

# 'Arctic Wolves' head home to Alaska

By Spc. L.B. Edgar,  
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - The Arctic Wolves are returning to Alaska as a pack after 16 consecutive months of operations here.

The Soldiers of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team cased their colors in a ceremony Nov. 24 outside the Division Morale Welfare and Recreation complex.

The ceremony marked the official end of combat operations for the unit deployed primarily from Fort Wainwright and partially from Fort Richardson, Alaska.

"The Arctic Wolves have accomplished a great deal in the last 16 months; successful partnership and COIN (counter insurgency) success in Northern Iraq, protecting the population and reducing the EJK (extra-judicial killing) violence in our focus areas of Baghdad," said Col. Mike

Shields, the brigade commander.

In accomplishing the mission, the 172nd suffered the loss of great Soldiers, said Shields, a native of Kennebunk, Maine.

"It is time for one of the greatest brigades in our Army's history to case the colors and return home. We will never for-

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# Troops set to redeploy after 16 months

## Wolves

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get the sacrifices of our Soldiers, our families and our children," Shields said during



(Photo by Spc. L.B. Edgar 7th MPAD)

**Col. Mike Shields, brigade commander, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, addresses the Soldiers in attendance for his unit's color casing ceremony.**

the ceremony.

Over the past 16 months the 172nd suffered the loss of 26 fallen heroes and 350 Soldiers were wounded in action, said Maj. Michael Blankartz, the brigade public affairs officer, a native of Mobridge, S. D.

He said their service would not be forgotten.

After 12 months of service in Northern Iraq, mainly Al Anbar, Rawaha and Mosul, the Arctic Wolves were ordered to Baghdad for an additional four months of service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, said Staff Sgt. Yvonne Smith, a command group administrative assistant for the brigade.

The 172nd spent the final 106 days of its deployment conducting combat operations in Baghdad, said Maj. Tim Stiansen, brigade adjutant, from Telford, Penn.

"Just in support of Operation Together Forward (the last four months of the deployment) we cleared over 70,000 buildings in Baghdad," said Blankartz, a native of Mobridge, S. D.

A return to their natural habitat of Alaska has been a long time coming for the Arctic Wolves.

"It will be exactly 16 months from the time our first troops stepped foot on the ground," said Smith, who hails from San Antonio, Texas.

"Hopefully our presence here brought a lot of organizations together so that we have a sense of what we need to do next, without sacrificing lives of Soldiers and Iraqis," Smith said. "It should be taken as a lesson learned. It's not the Strykers alone. It's engaging the people and showing them you are human."

Blankartz said the Arctic Wolves had five Silver Star Medal recipients and the pack received the Valorous Unit Award from Gen. George C. Casey, the commanding general of the Multi-National Force - Iraq, for its exceptional service.

"For the strength of the pack is the wolf," Shields quoted Rudyard Kipling to close the ceremony, "and the strength of the wolf is the pack."

## Arabic Phrase of the Day

*il-yoom haara*

**Defined:  
it's cold**

## Iraq 3-Day Forecast



**Today**

**High: 68  
Low: 40**



**Tomorrow**

**High: 70  
Low: 39**



**Thursday**

**High: 72  
Low: 40**

**Commanding General:** Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr.  
**Public Affairs Officer:** Lt. Col. Scott Bleichwehl  
**Command Information Supervisor:** Master Sgt. Dave Larsen  
**NCOIC, Print Production:** Staff Sgt. Mary Rose  
**Editor:** Sgt. Michael Garrett  
**Staff Writers:** Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, Spc. L.B. Edgar, Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma, Pfc. Ben Gable, Pfc. Shea Butler, Pfc. William Hatton  
**Contributing Writers:** Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie

Contact the *Daily Charge* at VOIP 242-4093, DSN 318-847-2855 or e-mail [david.j.larsen@mnd-b.army.mil](mailto:david.j.larsen@mnd-b.army.mil).

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# Eagle Cash Card saves time, money

**Pfc. Shea Butler**  
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Does your roommate have sticky fingers? Are you tired of loosing your cash on all those high-speed missions you go on? Then the Eagle Cash Card is what you need.

The Eagle Cash Card is a device to help Soldiers who are deployed to Kuwait and Iraq. It is meant to prevent Soldiers from loosing their cash, getting their cash stolen and aids Soldiers to save more and spend less.

It is a card directly linked to the cardholder's bank account and enables Soldiers to transfer funds from their checking account to their ECC.

The ECC can be used in theater at any Army Air Force Exchange Services vendor. Soldiers can access their funds

from many locations in theater.

There are a number of ECC kiosks here in Iraq, said Command Sgt. Maj. Barbara Pettit, the top noncommissioned officer with the 15th Finance Battalion.

"Right now, there are 30 kiosks in Iraq," Pettit said. "In the Victory Base Complex alone, there are 10 active kiosks.

"In the spring, Soldiers can expect approximately 35-40 additional kiosks operating throughout Iraq," she said.

There are many security features on the ECC to prevent theft for Soldiers protection.

"No one can access your funds without your pin number and your card," said Sgt 1st Class Jose Rivera, 15th Finance Battalion.

"If you misplace your card or it gets stolen you can go to the finance office and report it,"



(Photo by Pfc. Shea Butler, 7th MPAD)

**Spc. Charlie Henriquez, a native of Passaic, N.J., with Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, transfers money to his Eagle Cash Card so he can buy some essentials.**

Pettit added. "We will transfer your funds to a new card so you won't be out of any money. Cash does not have that kind of security."

Not only is the card safer, but there is simply not many other ways to pay for things while deployed.

Soldiers don't have access to automated teller machines, and most major credit cards charge an inflated, overseas interest rate. There are no fees or interest with the ECC, Rivera said.

Even transactions between Soldiers - to repay a loan or purchasing a used television, for example - can be done using an ECC.

"You can transfer funds from your card to another Soldiers card if you go to the kiosk at the same time," Pettit said.

Pettit said Soldiers often ask what happens to their money on the cash cards once they depart Iraq. There are ECC kiosks on Fort Hood, but the money remaining on the card will be returned to your bank account after the expiration date of the card.

"The ECC cards are configured to expire 13 months after activation," Pettit said.

If a Soldier does not unload their card during re-deployment and gets back to home-station with money on the card, they can call the ECC hotline to get their remaining funds deposited back into their bank account.

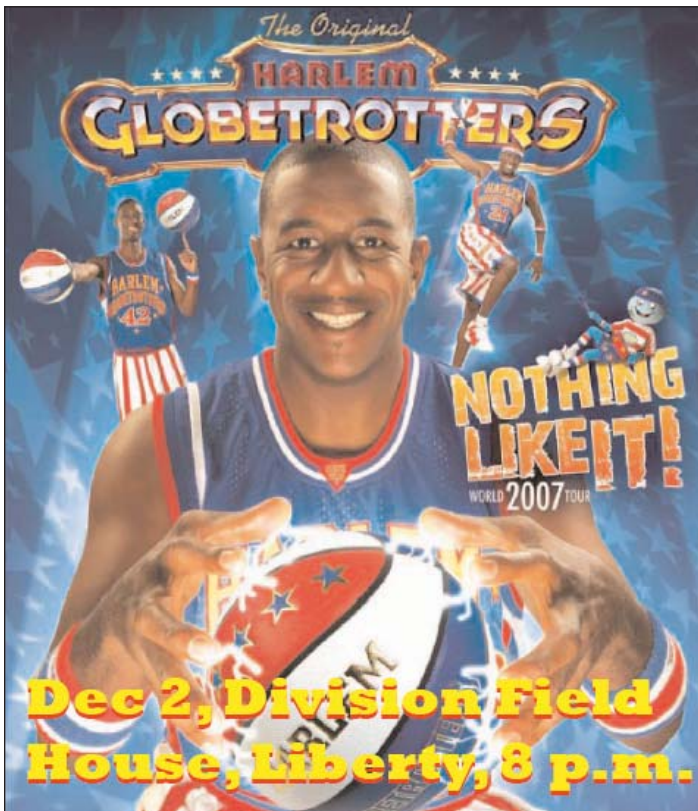
Cash cards are available at your local finance office. All you need to bring is your account number and routing number.

"They don't even have to bring us their bank information if they want to use the bank account their pay goes to," Pettit added.

"It's quick, easy and you don't have to wait in a long line for a casual pay," Rivera said.

The ECC hotline is: DSN - 312-955-3555, or toll free (commercial) - (877) 973-8982.

Soldiers can also e-mail the ECC hotline at [eagle@bos.frb.org](mailto:eagle@bos.frb.org). ECC representatives will cancel the card and send the remaining funds back to the Soldier's bank account or an alternate account, if requested.



# 10th Mtn. Div. BOLT helps secure Iraqis future

By Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie  
10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

RADWANIYAH, Iraq - Mohamad, an Iraqi farmer, found it difficult enough to survive on what produce he could eke out of his small desert farm. But when some of the carefully constructed irrigation channels were destroyed, he had no way to provide for his family.

Mohamad's land was partially destroyed when the U.S. Army closed roads for military purposes. While the roads were closed a vehicle drove across his land, caving in the canal and stopping the water flow to his crops. Mohamad had nowhere to turn - except to the U.S. Army's Brigade Operational Law Team for help.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, claims mission plays a vital role in promoting and maintaining friendly relations with the local Iraqi people.

"Money is essentially another weapon system on the battlefield," said Capt. Nate Hummel, a native of Buffalo, N.Y., who serves as the 2nd BCT's appointed, single-member, Foreign Claims Commission.



**Spc. Patrick Burt-Henderson (left), a claims paralegal specialist, counts money at the Civil Military Operations Center.**



(Photos by Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs)

**Staff Sgt. Daniel Davis II, a native of Nashville, Tenn., who serves as the 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. Brigade Operational Law Team's noncommissioned officer in charge and claims pay agent, hands an Iraqi money for a claim that had been settled at the Civil Military Operations Center in Radwaniyah, Iraq.**

"Not only are we living up to our moral and legal obligations in taking responsibility for our actions, but we truly are helping the Iraqi people."

The BOLT is able to help the Iraqis under the provisions of the Foreign Claims Act.

The FCA allows compensation for local nationals who suffer damage, injury or death as a result of non-combat activities, negligent or wrongful acts or omissions committed by the U.S. military personnel.

"The (FCA) is good because we are trying to do some right to the accident that was done," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Davis II, a native of Nashville who serves as the 2nd BCT BOLT noncommissioned officer in charge and the claims pay agent. "Sometimes this is their only livelihood and their only means of survival. Our claims mission is primarily to help the Iraqi people."

Every week the BOLT works hand-in-hand with the Iraqi claims personnel to provide assistance to the locals at either the Radwaniyah Palace Complex's Civil Military Operations Center or Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah, southwest of Baghdad.

The CMOC is fully staffed with sever-

al Iraqi interpreters, claims specialists and attorneys who review claims and assist in advising claimants on collection or proper documents, photographs and other pieces of evidence.

It is important that the locals build bonds with the United States so they will not turn to terrorist for help.

"I trust the people of the United States and I believe they don't want to do anything bad to the Iraqi people," Mohamad said. "They want to help the Iraqi people."

Since the U.S. Army helped Mohamad he decided to join the Iraqi Army.

"Since I have seen the (U.S.) military helping the Iraqis I wanted to do something for my people," Mohamad said. "I have already got my identification card and I am joining the IA."

Mohamad was just one of the many locals who the BOLT has helped. Each week at least 50 locals ask for help.

"Paying these claims to the locals helps promote and maintain friendly relations in the 2nd BCT's AO," Hummel added. "This builds upon the local population's trust and confidence in us."

The BOLT will continue to run weekly meetings with the Iraqis throughout the deployment to help the Iraqis with their claims.